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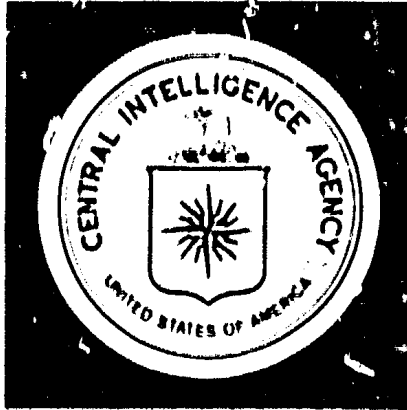
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16 June 73



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Cease-Fire Developments

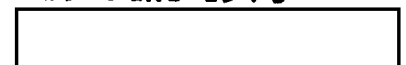
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Cease-Fire Developments



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C O N T E N T S

16 June 1973

SOUTH VIETNAM. 1

Military Situation
New Order From President Thieu



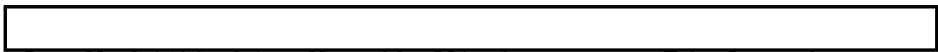
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CAMBODIA 4

Military Situation



LAOS 5



An Optimistic North Vietnamese Diplomat

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SOUTH VIETNAMThe Military Situation

Some fighting continues, but at a level considerably lower than that which followed the 27 January cease-fire agreement. The heaviest fighting is in the delta in Chuong Thien and Dinh Tuong provinces, but the action is between local units, and no important changes in territorial or population control have occurred. The provinces around Saigon are the quietest; all roads in the region are open, except for Route 13 to An Loc. Fairly sharp fighting is still going on in Kontum Province in the central highlands where government units so far have not been able to retake territory seized by the Communists on 9 June.

In Military Region 1, most of the fighting remains concentrated in the southern provinces. South Vietnamese units are still probing contested areas in Quang Ngai and Quang Nam provinces, and the Communists are reacting with shellings and ground attacks. Field reports indicate that fighting in this area could escalate on government initiative as South Vietnamese forces try to firm up control of territory near strategic sections of Route 1.

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Meanwhile, Liberation Radio has notified Viet Cong units [] that North Vietnamese forces in at least the northernmost parts of the country have been told to honor the cease-fire. Saigon has also instructed its commanders to abide by the new truce [] But, at the same time, both sides also remain skeptical of the other's intentions and have informed their respective forces to remain "vigilant" and to vigorously defend the areas they control. []

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16 June 1973

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A New Order From President Thieu

President Thieu on 15 June ordered government military and civilian officials at all levels to first get written permission from Saigon before conducting any face-to-face meetings with the Viet Cong. In a sternly worded directive, Thieu noted that he had received reports in the past of unauthorized local contacts between government officials and the Communists and that all of them had been initiated by the Viet Cong "to destroy the morale of our lower echelons." He said that the new directive is to be considered "a military order from me" and that anyone who fails to obey the order will be severely punished.

With the new cease-fire agreement calling for contacts within 24 hours between leaders of both sides, Thieu is plainly worried that too many local accommodations will be concluded without Saigon's knowledge. The new order appears to represent an effort by Thieu to both firmly control the frequency and level of contacts and to discourage local government officials from striking up arrangements on their own that might help undermine government influence in the countryside.

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CAMBODIAThe Military Situation

Government forces are trying again to clear a section of Route 4, some 15 miles west of Phnom Penh. Eight Cambodian battalions met moderate resistance on 16 June when they began moving west along the highway toward the Communist-held village of Thnal Totung. Elements of two government brigades, which are advancing eastward toward Thnal Totung, thus far have not reported any opposition. On Route 3, Communist attacks have forced government troops from the village of Prey Totung--ten miles south of Phnom Penh. In the northwest, the Communists on 16 June shelled ten government positions along Route 5 about 40 miles from Phnom Penh, temporarily closing the road. If Routes 4 and 5 are not reopened shortly, rice stocks in Phnom Penh could be depleted before the end of this month. [REDACTED]

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LAOS

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The North Vietnamese chargé [REDACTED]

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thought a "settlement was not far off in Laos" and that no obstacles existed which could not be overcome if both sides made a little effort. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] for the first time in several months the North Vietnamese did not criticize the Vientiane side. [REDACTED]

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